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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------026202 261325Z /43
R 251448Z JAN 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6640
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0115

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDEV, RH, NA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA: A PARALLEL ASSESSMENT AND A SUGGESTED STRATEGY.

1. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCES IN THE NAMIBIAN AND RHODESIAN SITUATIONS, THE DYNAMICS OF THE SETTLEMENT PROCESSES ARE REMARKABLY SIMILAR AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES AND THE FATE OF ANY "INTERNAL SOLUTIONS" IN THESE TERRITORIES WILL BE INTERTWINED. BY A PECULIAR COINCIDENCE, INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON BOTH ISSUES APPEAR TO PEAK ABOUT THE SAME TIME. AT PRESENT, WE FACE THE PROSPECT OF EARLY STEPS IN EACH CASE TOWARD FORMALIZATION OF INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS--IN NAMIBIA AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ELECTION DATE, AND IN RHODESIA AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE BETWEEN THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT

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TALKS. AT THE SAME TIME, NEW STEPS TO FIND INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENTS ARE ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE--THE FEBRUARY 10-11 NEW YORK PROXIMITY TALKS ON NAMIBIA, AND THE JANUARY 30 MALTA TALKS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

2. AT PRESENT, THE KEY TO KEEPING ALIVE HOPES FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ACCORD ON BOTH ISSUES SEEMS TO BE WINNING

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ACCEPTANCE BY THE NATIONALIST FORCES CONCERNED OF THE
PROPOSED SETTLEMENT PLAN PUT FORWARD IN EACH CASE--
THE CONTACT GROUP'S PROPOSAL ON NAMIBIA AND THE ANGLO-
AMERICAN PLAN FOR RHODESIA. ALTHOUGH BOTH THE SAG AND
THE SMITH REGIME BEAR AN EQUAL OR GREATER RESPONSIBILITY
THAN THE NATIONALIST FORCES FOR THE FAILURE SO FAR OF
THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS ON NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA
RESPECTIVELY, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO RALLY EFFECTIVE
WESTERN OPPOSITION TO THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS WHICH
THESE REGIMES ARE MANIPULATING IF SWAPO AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT
DO NOT BASICALLY ACCEPT THE SEPARATE INTERNATIONAL PROPOSALS THAT
WILL BE PUT TO THEM AT THE FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

3. IN PURSUING THEIR SEPARATE BUT RELATED STRATEGIES,
THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND THE RHODESIANS SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT A
NUMBER OF FACTORS WILL PRECLUDE THE WESTERN COUNTRIES,
PARTICULARLY THE UK, FROM OPPOSING THE NEW "BLACK"
REGIMES IN EITHER NAMIBIA OR RHODESIA. THESE FACTORS
INCLUDE: THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS' PROVISIONS FOR
ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE ELECTIONS; THE OSTENSIBLY MAJORITY
RULE, BLACK-LED GOVERNMENTS THAT WILL PRESUMABLY
EMERGE IN EACH COUNTRY; AND THE LIKELY ABILITY OF
THESE GOVERNMENTS WITH SAG ASSISTANCE TO CONTAIN MILITARY THREATS
POSED BY THE NATIONALIST FORCES. PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT
FACTOR IN THE CALCULATIONS OF CAPE TOWN AND SALISBURY, HOWEVER,
IS THE RECORD OF THE INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE TWO ISSUES.
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THEY THINK THAT BLACK NATIONALIST DIVISIONS AND FAILURE
TO NEGOTIATE BASIC PROVISIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SETTLEMENT PLANS CAN BE EFFECTIVELY PORTRAYED AS THE
PRINCIPAL IMPEDIMENT TO WESTERN PEACE EFFORTS. IN THE
CASE OF NAMIBIA, THE SAG ALSO HOPES TO MAKE A CONVINCING
CASE THAT IT HAS PRODUCED A SERIES OF CONCESSIONS WHICH
HAVE ESSENTIALLY MET THE CONDITIONS OF SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION 385. THUS BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE OPERATING
ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAILURE OF THE INTER-
NATIONAL EFFORTS CAN BE CONVINCINGLY ASCRIBED, AT LEAST IN THE
WEST, MORE TO THE NATIONALIST FORCES THAN TO THEMSELVES.

4. GIVEN THE APPARENTLY SIMILAR SOUTH AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN
INTENTIONS AND CALCULATIONS, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT ONLY TWO
DEVELOPMENTS COULD MOVE EITHER REGIME TO FUNDAMENTALLY REASSESS
ITS POSITION ON THE RELATED INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS:
(1) BASIC ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS BY THE NATIONALIST FORCES
CONCERNED, IE.E., SWAPO AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT; OR
(2) THE THREAT OF MAJOR NEW SANCTIONS AGAINST THE SAG. THE POLIT-
ICAL REALITY, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE LATTER DEVELOPMENT IS HIGHLY
UNLIKELY WITHOUT THE FORMER OCCURRING FIRST.

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5. THUS, THE QUESTION IS, HOW DO WE WIN SWAPO AND PF COOPERATION? FROM OUR LIMITED PERSPECTIVE IT APPEARS THAT ARGUMENTATION BY THE FRONT LINE AND OTHER SUPPORTERS OF SWAPO AND THE PF WILL HAVE MARGINAL IMPACT ON MOVING EITHER OF THESE PARTIES TO ACCEPT THE RESPECTIVE SETTLEMENT PLANS WE AND OUR ALLIES HAVE PROPOSED. THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED ON ANOTHER PARALLEL IN THE NAMIBIAN AND RHODESIAN ISSUES--THE RELUCTANCE OF BOTH SWAPO AND THE PF (AS WELL AS THE SAG AND THE SMITH REGIME) TO STAKE THEIR RESPECTIVE FUTURES ON ELECTORAL PROCESSES THAT THEY DO NOT CONTROL. THE LEADERSHIP OF BOTH PARTIES APPARENTLY PREFER THE OPTION OF LONG-TERM ARMED STRUGGLES AIMED AT WINNING A DIRECT TRANSFER OF POWER. THREATS BY THE FRONT LINE TO

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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EXDIS

VURTAIL AID AND OTHER FORMS OF COOPERATION COULD OF COURSE HAVE DRAMATIC EFFECT, BUT IT APPEARS UNCERTAIN HOW MUCH PRESSURE OF THIS SORT, IF ANY, THE FRONT LINE STATES ARE PREPARED TO EXERT.

6. THUS, WHILE WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO RALLY AS MUCH PRESSURE AS POSSIBLE FROM THESE SOURCES, PERHAPS THE MAJOR LEVERAGE WE HAVE AT THIS POINT IS HOLDING OUT THE PROSPECT TO SWAPO AND THE PF THAT IF THEY ACCEPT THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT PLANS, THE WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD ACTIVELY OPPOSE

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NEW INTERNALLY ARRANGED REGIMES IN NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA.
AS A COROLLARY, IF THEY REJECT THE SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS, IT
WOULD BE APPARENT THAT THE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT BE
ABLE TO JUSTIFY SUCH ACTIONS. IT SHOULD ALSO BE EVIDENT
TO THE NATIONALIST FORCES THAT IN THE LATTER CASE, SOME
WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD PROBABLY BLOCK ADDITIONAL UN SANCTIONS
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DIRECTED AGAINST THE NEW REGIMES OR SOUTH AFRICA.

7. OUR GENERAL STRATEGY OPTIONS ON HOW TO EXERT THIS
LEVERAGE IN THE FORTHCOMING MEETINGS ON BOTH NAMIBIA AND
RHODESIA APPEAR TO BE SIMILAR. ONE APPROACH WOULD BE TO
RELY PRIMARILY ON PERSUASION ABOUT THE MERITS OF THE SETTLEMENT
PLAN AND ON THE BACKING OF THE SUPPORTERS OF THE NATIONALIST
FORCES TO BRING THEM AROUND. THIS APPROACH WOULD RETAIN
FLEXIBILITY AND AVOID CHARGES THAT WE WERE ATTEMPTING TO
PRESSURE SWAPO AND THE PF INTO APPROVING OUR PROPOSALS. IT WOULD
ALSO ALLOW US TO AVOID THE TOUGH QUESTIONS AS TO WHAT PRECISELY
WE WOULD DO IF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS SHOULD MOVE AHEAD
IN NAMIBIA OR RHODESIA.

8. THE ODDS APPEAR RATHER HIGH THAT IF WE TAKE
THIS APPROACH, LITTLE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS WILL BE
MADE H EITHER NEW YORK OR MALTA, THE WESTERN INITIATIVE
ON NAMIBIA AND THE ANGLO-AMERICAN EFFORT ON RHODESIA
WILL LOSE MOMENTUM AND THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS WILL
BEGIN TO BE FORMALIZED. WE WILL THEN BE UNDER STRONG
PRESSURE FROM THE BLACK AFRICAN STATES TO SUPPORT NEW SANCTIONS
BUT WILL VERY LIKELY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO WIN AGREEMENT
FOR SUCH MEASURES AMONG OUR WESTERN ALLIES. THE CHANCES
OF MARRYING AN INTERNAL SETTMENT WITH THE RESPECTIVE
INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE WOULD SEEM REMOTE IN NAMIBIA
AND HIGHLY PROBLEMATICAL IN RHODESIA. IF THE PF AND
THE SMITH REGIME, AND SWAPO AND THE SAG CANNOT AT THIS
STAGE AGREE ON TRANSITION AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS,
THEY WOULD SEEM EVEN LESS ABLE TO DO SO ONCE THE INTERNAL
SETTLEMENTS HAD BEEN LAUNCHED.

9. AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY WOULD BE TO PLEDGE STRONG
AND EFFECTIVE ACTION AGAINST THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS
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IF THE RELATED INTERNATIONAL PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED BY
THE NATIONALIST FORCE CONCERNED. IN THIS APPROACH WE
WOULD INFORM SWAPO AND THE PF AS WELL AS THE FRONT LINE

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AND NIGERIA THAT OUR ULTIMATE STANCE IN REGARD TO INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS IN NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA WILL DEPEND IN THE FIRST INSTANCE ON THE NEGOTIATING POSITION OF THE NATIONALIST FORCE INVOLVED, I.E., ON THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE RESPECTIVE SETTLEMENT PLAN THAT WE SUPPORT--THE CONTACT GROUP'S PROPOSAL IN THE CASE OF NAMIBIA, AND THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN IN THE CASE OF RHODESIA. SPECIFICALLY, WE WOULD STATE THAT IF THE NATIONALIST FORCE CONCERNED SHOULD ACCEPT THE PROPOSED PLAN, THIS WOULD (A) PLACE GREAT PRESSURE ON SMITH AND VORSTER TO ACCEPT THE SETTLEMENT AND (B) PROVIDE A FIRM BASIS FOR WESTERN COUNTRIES TO OPPOSE THE NEW REGIMES BASED ON INTERNAL SETTLEMENTS AND SUPPORT SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. THE COLORLLARY BY IMPLICATION WOULD BE THAT IF THE NATIONALIST FORCE DOES NOT ACCEPT ITS RELATED PLAN, WE WOULD ADOPT A WAIT-AND-SEE POSTURE TOWARD THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT INVOLVED AND OUR FINAL POSITION WOULD DEPEND ON HOW EACH SETTLEMENT WORKED IN PRACTICE.

10. IF WE PURSUED THIS LINE, SWAPO AND THE PF WOULD BE FACED WITH THE OPTION OF EITHER ACCEPTING THE SETTLEMENTS THAT PROVIDED FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTORAL DETERMINATIONS OF THE FUTURE GOVERNMENTS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES, OR CONTINUING THEIR ARMED STRUGGLES WITH, AT BEST, UNCERTAIN PROSPECTS. WITH THIS POLICY WE WOULD IN EITHER EVENT HAVE LIVED UP TO OUR COMMITMENTS TO THE UN AND TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES SUCH AS NIGERIA, TANZANIA AND MOZAMBIQUE.

11. THIS STRATEGY WOULD OF COURSE REQUIRE AGREEMENT AMONG THE WESTERN COUNTRIES INVOLVED TO FOLLOW THROUGH, AS NECESSARY, WITH NEW MEASURES AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND RESTRICTIONS AGAINST THE EMERGING NEW

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REGIMES IN SALISBURY AND WINDHOEK. WE RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING AGREEMENT ON NEW SANCTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, THE POSSIBILITIES OF GAINING ACCEPTANCE OF OUR PLANS AND THEREBY AVOIDING SANCTIONS, WOULD SEEM TO BE GREATER IF THE COMMITMENT TO SANCTIONS IS TIED TO NATIONALIST FORCE ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS.
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